

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-6 and 8-37 are allowed; and claims 2 and 7 are rejected.

Review and reconsideration on the merits are requested.

Claims 2 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S.

Patent No. 6,815,126 to Fey et al.

Particularly, the Examiner considered Fey et al. as disclosing the wiring board substantially as claimed in claims 2 and 7, including a layer 62 containing Ni (said to be a platinum group metal) having a P content of not higher than 3 weight % disposed between Cu- and Au-containing layers. The Examiner considered that the Ni-containing layer of the prior art having the same composition as that of the claimed layer containing Ni (claim 2) or layer containing platinum-metal (claim 7) would *inherently* function as a barrier layer.

In response, claim 2 has been amended to recite that the barrier layer is an electroless Ni-plated layer having a P content not higher than 3 % by weight, to thereby distinguish over the prior art which discloses an electrolytic nickel layer 62.

As to claim 7, although Ni is in the same group as Pt, a Ni layer is not a platinum-metal-based layer. To clarify this distinction, claim 7 has been amended to recite that the barrier layer is a platinum-metal-based layer containing a metal selected from the group consisting of Ru, Rh, Pd, Os, Ir and Pt. Support is found, for example, at page 8, lines 12-14 of the specification. New claim 38 presented for examination recites that the platinum-metal-based layer of claim 7 contains a metal selected from the group consisting of Ru, Rh, Pd, Os, Ir and Pt as a chief component, meaning the component highest in mass content as described at page 8, lines 12-14

of the specification. It is respectfully submitted that the amendment to claim 7 excludes and patentably distinguishes over the Ni-containing layer of the prior art.

Withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of claims 1-38 is earnestly solicited.

In the event that the Examiner believes that it may be helpful to advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number indicated below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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